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STATE FOR EAP/MLS AND DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/04/2018
TAGS: PGOV KDEM PHUM CB
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER EVINCES CONFIDENCE IN FACE OF
ARREST RUMORS

REF: PHNOM PENH 283

Classified By: Economics Officer Jennifer Spande for reason 1.4 (b)

¶1. (SBU) In an April 3 meeting with Poleconoffs, Sam Rainsy
Party (SRP) parliamentarian Tioulong Samura evinced
confidence in the face of rumors that she could be arrested
over allegations that she was involved in the detention of a
defector from the Sam Rainsy Party (reftel). Samura, who had
just returned to Cambodia from overseas, said that she was
aware of arrest rumors--including some gossip that her
parliamentary immunity could be lifted. There were always
rumors, she said, and it was impossible to know what rumors
to take seriously. She declared herself ready to serve time
in jail, with her suitcase already packed with several
lengthy books and yarn to knit clothes for her new
grandchild. She also stated that she would be willing to
answer questions from the police if asked.

¶2. (C) The opposition leader, who is also the wife of party
chief Sam Rainsy, said that she wasn't surprised by the
allegations, describing them as "one of a series of tricks
they (the CPP) has used against us." She also relayed
accusations about Cambodian People's Party (CPP) infiltration
of the SRP: that some SRP defectors had been assigned to
publicly defect while others were told to remain within the
party as spies. (Comment: This information is third
hand--coming from alleged detention victim Tim Norn, who has
proven to be an unreliable source prone to change stories,
and delivered via Samura. End Comment.) Samura said she
expected another wave of detentions in late April when the
SRP submits its party list.
MUSSOMELI